DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 283 855 TM 870 377

AUTHOR Atman, Kathryn S.; Romano, Patricia R.
TITLE Conation, Goal Accomplishment Style and Wholistic Education.
PUB DATE Apr 87
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Washington, DC, April 20-24, 1987).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Correlation; *Goal Orientation; Higher Education; *Holistic Approach; Individual Characteristics; Locus of Control; Metacognition; *Problem Solving; Pupil Personnel Services; *Self Evaluation (Individuals)
IDENTIFIERS *Conation; Myers Briggs Type Indicator; Orientation Inventory; Rotter Internal External Locus of Control Scale; *Self Report Measures

ABSTRACT

Conation is a domain of behavior or mental processes associated with goal directed action. Wholistic education stresses an integrated approach to an individual's learning process; thus, consideration of the integration of the four domains (cognitive, affective, psychomotor and conative) can find a receptive niche among educators who seek to facilitate personal growth for learners. The Conation Cycle provides a means of examining the steps that occur between setting a goal and the achievement of that goal. Four instruments were used in the examination of personality attributes related to goal accomplishment capability: the Goal Orientation Index, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the Rotter Locus of Control (I/E) Scale and the Bass Orientation Inventory. Data from two studies involving Pennsylvania pupil serivces administrators and industrial engineering students at West Virginia University suggest that: (1) personal information from inventories enables an individual to make decisions concerning his/her personal or professonal development; (2) correlation data can be used to tailor individualized prescription for self-monitored behavior change; and (3) development of metacognitive and intrapersonal skills is a necessary element in the wholistic development of individuals. Conation provides a theoretical framework which brings together the mind/body/values foci of wholistic education. (BAE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED283855

CONATION, GOAL ACCOMPLISHMENT STYLE AND WHOLISTIC EDUCATION

Kathryn S. Atman and Patricia Redick Romano

Paper Presented at the
American Educational Research Association
1987 Annual Meeting
April 23, Washington, DC

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

K. S. Atman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

TM 870 377

CONATION, GOAL ACCOMPLISHMENT STYLE AND WHOLISTIC EDUCATION

Kathryn S. Atman and Patricia Redick Romano

There is a domain of behavior or mental processes associated with goal-directed action that can be identified and, as such, should be of interest to wholistic educators. This domain, a separate entity from the well established cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, is the domain of CONATION.

Background of the Construct, CONATION

Conation as a psychological term has a two hundred year-old history. First used by German and Scottish faculty psychologists in the 18th and 19th centuries to describe the tripartite faculties of the mind (cognition, affection, and conation), conation as a classification system fell into disuse in this country as psychological thought was influenced first by William James and others who emphasized will power (compatible with the American belief in individualism) and later by behaviorists who were not interested in the unmeasureable "will." Although conation took a back seat to the well known and understood realms of cognition and

affection, it did not disappear as a psychological phenomenon. Hilgard, in a review of the history of the tripartite classification system, attested that the system of cognition, affection, and conation had utility and should not be lost. (Hilgard, 1980) Snow, in describing understandings of the intellectual process needed in the year 2001, identified conation as a specific problem area related to information processing theory and that research in conation should be pursued. (Snow, 1980)

Conation has been defined as "aspects of mental processes or behavior directed toward action or change and including impulse, desire, volition and striving" (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1971) and as "that aspect of man's psychic life having to do with striving and will, traditionally distinguished from cognition and affection" (Good, Dictionary of Education, 1973). For purposes of this paper, conation is defined as "vectored energy - i.e., personal energy that has direction and magnitude." (Atman, 1987)

Wholistic education stresses an integrated approach to an individual's learning process. Thus, consideration of the integration of the four domains (cognitive, affective, psychomotor and conative) can find a receptive niche among educators who seek reasonable ways to facilitate personal growth for learners. Knowing something is not enough to accomplish a goal; one must invest energy in the creative, problem-solving apsect of a project to move from inception to

completion.

Maslow recognized the importance of conation as an aspect of psychological behavior: "Healthy people are more integrated in another way. In them, the conative, the cognitive, the affective and the motor are less separated from each other, and are more synergic, i.e. working collaboratively without conflict to the same ends." (Maslow, 1968) In addition, according to Maslow, the integration of conative and cognitive behaviors plays an important role in the creative life or the creative attitude, characterized by such qualities as "boldness, courage, freedom, spontaneity, perspicuity, integration, self-acceptance. (Maslow, 1968) Although Maslow emphasized the "Being quality" of SA (Self Actualized) creativeness, he recognized that the problem-solving or product-making aspects of the creative process were generally at work in individuals.

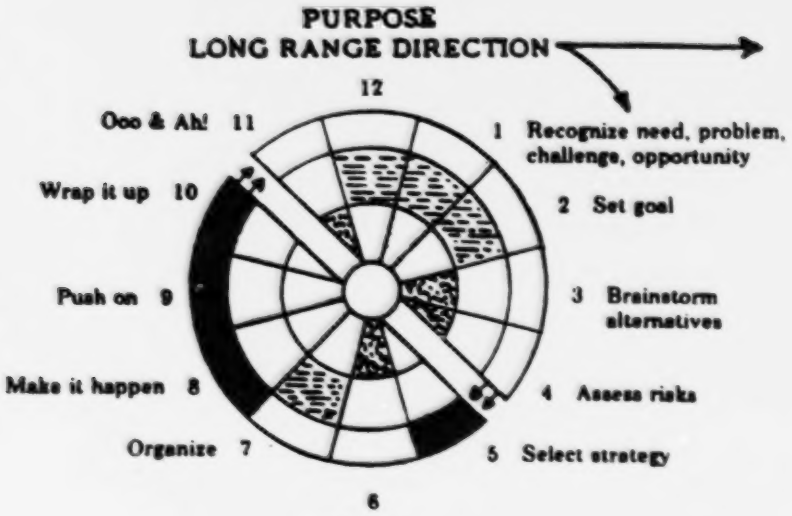
Problem-solving and product-making involve striving - the directed effort one puts forth in order to accomplish something. Consider a physics/mechanics analogy: force x distance = work done; striving through a sequence of steps = accomplished goal. Although the condition of striving might abstractly be demonstrated by a perpetual motion machine, humans usually strive - not needlessly - but toward a goal. (Atman and Atman, 1983) This goal/value-directed behavior is characterized by its natural flow of energy (libido). Jung described libido as "psychic energy, which is equivalent to the

intensity with which psychic contents are charged." (Jung, 1966) These psychic contents can be either conscious or unconscious and manifest themselves in the life process as conation or desire. (Jung, 1970) Thus, when one values something highly (sets a goal) he/she brings into focus a natural source of energy, setting in motion the process of goal accomplishment.

The CONATION CYCLE: A Theoretical Model of Goal Accomplishment

The Conation Cycle, the problem-solving model delineated in Figure 1, provides a means of systematically examining the steps that occur between the setting of a goal and the achievement of that goal. Presented in graphic form as a mnemonic visual, the Conation Cycle suggests that, in the general course of setting and accomplishing goals, there is a time to reflect, a time to plan, and a time to act. Data from the Goal Orientation Index indicates that Americans (n = 1116) are into "acting" (what one might call the "John Wayne Syndrome") - but they are not as strong in planning and reflecting. (Atman, 1986) In addition, it appears that there are identifiable personality attributes that are related to the ability to achieve specific steps in the goal accomplishment process.

THE CONATION CYCLE



GYAIG

GET YOUR ACT IN GEAR

BEHAVIORAL REGIMES:

ACTING PLANNING REFLECTING

Copyright 1982,1986 Kathryn S. Atman

Figure 1.

Research reported in this paper answers the following questions:

1. What personality attributes are related to specific steps in the goal accomplishment process as delineated by the categories of the Conation Cycle?

2. Of what value is personal information management in the process of wholistic education?

Conative Research Methodology

Four instruments were used in the examination of personality attributes related to goal accomplishment capability: the Goal Orientation Index (Atman, 1986); the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Form G (Myers, Briggs, 1976); the Rotter Locus of Control (I/E) Scale, 1966; and the Bass Orientation Index, 1977. Brief content descriptions of the four instruments follow.

1. Goal Orientation Index

The Goal Orientation Index, a 96 item, self-report inventory based on the twelve categories of the Conation Cycle, provides the user with a profile of his/her Goal Accomplishment Style. Such information can be useful in the self-management decision making process. Reliability coefficients for the Goal Orientation Index range from .789 to .941 across its twelve categories. This instrument has been tested with approximately 2000 individuals.

In general, the Conation Cycle categories are self-explanatory. Two of the categories, however, can best be understood from the following descriptions (Atman, 1987):

Category 6: Get Your Act in Gear An individual who scores high in this category is one who visualizes how things are going to be when the goal is accomplished, mentally rehearses the planned activity, and imagines how successful and

proud he/she will feel when the goal is accomplished.

Category 11: Ooo & Ah! An individual who scores high in this category is one who rewards him/herself for a job that is complete and well done and uses rigorous criteria to evaluate/critique all aspects of the work - thus providing a strong base for future risk assessment.

2. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

The MBTI, Form G, is a 126 item self-report inventory based on Jung's theory of psychological types. (Jung, 1971) Jung first identified a major difference in the way an individual's energy flows: extraverts live mainly in their outer world with their energy flowing out to people, things and objects; introverts live mainly in their inner world with their energy flowing inward toward concepts and ideas. An individual has the potential for both kinds of behavior, i.e., an introvert can extravert or an extravert can introvert, but essentially the major attitude (either extraversion or introversion) tends to be a strong characteristic of the individual - causing him/her to function mainly as an extravert or introvert in his/her life style..

In addition to his/her habitual attitude (extravert/introvert), each individual has a preferred way of perceiving and making judgments. Perception (gathering information) is carried out through either the sensing or intuitive functions. People who prefer sensing tend to be fact

oriented, are interested in the present and are "in touch with reality." In contrast, those who prefer intuition perceive with associations and memory, rely on hunches and are more concerned with the possibilities of the future. Each individual, according to Jung, makes judgments (decides what to do) using either the thinking or feeling functions. People who prefer the thinking function tend to use a logical, impersonal, analytic approach to decision making. They are those who organize "reality" into systems which can be managed. Those who prefer the feeling function make decisions based on personal beliefs or values. They, in contrast to the analytic, "thinking" individual, tend to be empathetic and concerned about harmony and the feelings of others. (Myers, 1980))

The extraversion/introversion, E/I; sensing/intuition, S/N; thinking/feeling, T/F; and judgment/perception, J/P "pairs" yield sixteen "type" combinations. (Myers and McCaulley, 1985)

3. Rotter Locus of Control (I/E) Scale

Two measures that describe an individual's belief about the source of reward he/she receives are derived from this self-report measure. Those individuals who believe that the reward received is a result of their own ability or skill have an "internal locus of control" while individuals who believe that the reward received is a result of luck, fate, or the actions of powerful others are characterized as having an

"external locus of control." (Rotter, 1966)

4. Bass Orientation Inventory

This self-report inventory measures three orientations of the individual: 1) the extent to which an individual is self-oriented (does things to obtain an extrinsic reward - regardless of the impact of his/her actions on others), 2) interaction-oriented (has a strong need for affiliation and wants to be accepted), or 3) task-oriented (concerned with job completion, problem solving, working persistently and doing the best possible job). Bass presents evidence that individuals at the upper levels of management are more strongly task-oriented than individuals at the lower levels. (Bass, 1977)

Data Sources

Two studies using the Goal Orientation Index (GOI) are being cited to demonstrate the value of a goal accomplishment orientation in the personal/professional development of the individual.

Study I: Pupil Services Administrators (Romano, 1986)

Administrators of pupil services in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania served as the participants in this study. These are individuals who are responsible for supervising guidance, psychological, health and social work services in public schools. The study was undertaken in an attempt to identify

this group of educational administrators about whom very little is known or has been reported in the literature. Although it is often expected that an individual possesses the cognitive knowledge to handle a given job when hired, less attention is usually directed to the individual's affective and conative behaviors or their intrapersonal characteristics. Therefore, a second purpose of the study was an investigation of the intrapersonal characteristics of these individuals, characteristics which may very likely contribute to the individual's successful job performance.

All pupil service administrators across the state of Pennsylvania were identified through a listing obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Education who were then solicited to participate in the study. Along with completing a demographic questionnaire, these individuals were also asked to complete the MBTI, the Rotter LOC Scale, and the Goal Orientation Index. A 65% response rate of pupil service administrators in Pennsylvania was obtained.

Results indicated that 78.5% of the participants scored 10 or less on the Rotter LOC Scale suggesting that the group generally demonstrates an internal locus of control. Fifty-three percent of the administrators fell into three of the 16 types on the MBTI. They were either introvert/sensing/thinking/judging (ISTJ), extravert/sensing/thinking/judging (ESTJ), or extravert/intuitive/thinking/judging (ENTJ) individuals. On

the GOI, reliability coefficients ranged from a .75 to a .91 which was judged as adequate. The highest mean score of these administrators was in the category of selecting a strategy (Category 5), whereas their lowest mean score was in assessing risks (Category 4). Overall, like the general population of GOI scores, these administrators received their highest scores in the Acting dimension and their lowest scores in the Reflecting dimension of the Goal Accomplishment Style Profile. Using a one way ANOVA, a significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between the means of the 12 goal accomplishment categories. Of the 66 Scheffe comparisons that were made to determine which means were significant, 41 were found to be significant, indicating that the categories were independent. Upon closer inspection, it was found that 17 of the 25 means which were not significant were means within the same dimensions (Acting, Planning, Reflecting).

When the GOI and Rotter LOC scores were correlated through use of Pearson product moment correlations, two negative low correlations were found. The results indicated that the higher an administrator's score was on selecting a strategy and looking ahead to establish a purpose in the goal orientation process, the more likely was he/she to demonstrate an internal locus of control. It is understandable that these two categories would be highly valued by internals who believe they control their environment.

When the GOI and MBTI scores were correlated, again using

Pearson product moment correlations, several low to moderate negative correlations were found. In terms of the MBTI extraverted/introverted scale, the more extraverted an administrator was, the more likely that he/she would be able to select strategies in accomplishing goals ($p < .05$) and to look ahead and establish a purpose ($p < .01$). On the sensing/intuition scale, the more an administrator preferred the sensing function, the more he/she appeared to be able to assess risks and to review and to evaluate ($p < .05$) as well as organize and wrap up a job ($p < .01$). In terms of the Thinking/Feeling scale, the more an individual prefers the thinking function, the more likely he/she appeared able to organize and wrap up a job ($p < .05$) and push on to accomplish the goal ($p < .01$.) However, the scale that correlated most highly with the Goal Orientation Index categories was the Judging/Perception scale where 10 of the 12 correlations were significant. If an administrator preferred the judging attitude, it was likely that he/she would perform well in generating alternatives and looking ahead ($p < .05$) as well as in setting goals, assessing risks, visualizing, organizing, "making it happen," pushing on, finishing the task, and reviewing/evaluating ($p < .01$).

Therefore, administrators who prefer the J attitude and who are also extraverted, sensing, and thinking appear to "have the edge" on accomplishing goals. The study suggested that individuals who preferred INFP

(introversion/intuition/feeling/perception) attitudes and functions might feel overwhelmed in a setting where they have many roles and responsibilities. Interestingly, only 3.2% of pupil services administrators fell into this type.

Study II: Industrial Engineering Seniors

In the winter term, 1986, industrial engineering seniors at West Virginia University were given both the GOI and the Bass Orientation Inventory. Data was examined using the Pearson product moment correlation technique. A significant positive correlation was found between Category 9 on the GOI (push on; don't procrastinate) and the task-orientation on the Bass ($p < .01$); a significant negative correlation was found between Category 9 on the GOI and the self-orientation on the Bass ($p < .05$); and a significant negative correlation was found between Category 5 on the GOI (select strategy, be decisive) and the interaction-orientation on the Bass ($p < .05$).

Procrastination is a time-honored problem. Data from this small study indicates a relationship between a task orientation and the ability not to "delay starting or completing work," or not to become "easily overwhelmed or frustrated by details." These results have important and challenging implications for individuals seeking to overcome problems associated with an inability to "push on."

Educational Importance of These Studies

The success of wholistic education lies, finally, in the individual's becoming aware of, taking charge of and assuming responsibility for his/her own cognitive, affective, psychomotor and conative behaviors. Data cited from these two studies suggest that:

1. personal information from an inventory such as the Goal Orientation Index, the MBTI, the Rotter Locus of Control Scale, or the Bass Orientation Inventory can be useful in enabling an individual to make decisions concerning his/her personal or professional development.

2. correlation data from the two studies can be used to tailor individualized prescriptions for self-monitored behavior change.

3. development of metacognitive (Flavell, 1976) and intrapersonal (Gardner, 1983) skills is a necessary and vital element in the wholistic development of individuals.

At the basic education level, intrapersonal skills training can be accomplished through linking goal setting with the use of self-directed study skills. At the adult and higher education levels, goal accomplishment style data can be useful in both academic and career counseling settings as well as for personal and professional development. At either level, striving (conation) is the essential capacity needed to translate what one knows (cognition) and values (affection)

into creative, productive work (or play).

Conation, as a fourth domain for educational theory and practice, provides a theoretical framework which brings together the mind/body/values foci of wholistic education. Not too long ago, behavioral psychologists spoke convincingly that the way to handle problems of motivation was to control the environment. Substantial data exists demonstrating the power of applied behavior modification strategies. Evidence mounts, however, that extrinsic reward systems destroy intrinsic motivation. (Mook, 1987) The control cost may be too high.

A more subtle, but perhaps more long-lasting, approach to the motivational aspect of personal/professional development can be found through 1) providing the individual with personal information about his/her goal accomplishment style, 2) teaching that person simple goal-directed skills and strategies, and 3) getting out of the way - with the expectations that the creative potential within each individual will emerge and that the person who manages information, is able to mobilize his/her own energy and control his/her own time use will become a productive - and, at the same time, integrated - human being. With the long range goal of self-integration in mind, consideration of the conative domain and goal accomplishment style as vehicles for wholistic education is useful, practical, and timely.

REFERENCES

Atman, K. S. (1986, October). Human effort: The dynamo underlying high tech access. In Proceedings ICTTE 86 Technology Shaping Our Future. (pp. 247-249). Pittsburgh, PA.

Atman, K. S. (In press). The role of conation (striving) in the distance learning enterprise. The American Journal of Distance Education.

Atman, K. S. (1987). Goal orientation index manual.

Atman, K. S. and Atman, C. J. (1983). Getting (and keeping) your act together: Implications of the conative domain for industrial settings. In Spring Annual Conference Proceedings (pp. 393-399). Atlanta, GA: Institute of Industrial Engineers.

Bass, B. M. (1977). Manual for the orientation inventory. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring. American Psychologist. 34, (10), 906-911.

Gardner, H. (1983). Frames of mind. New York: Basic Books, Inc. Publishers.

Hilgard, E. R. (1980). The trilogy of mind: Cognition, affection, and conation. Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences. 16, 107-117.

Jung, C. G. (1966). Two essays on analytical psychology. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Jung, C. G. (1970). The theory of psychoanalysis. In W. McQuire (Ed). Collected works of C. G. Jung (Vol. 4, pp. 111-128). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Jung, C. G. (1971). Psychological types. In W. McQuire (Ed). Collected works of C. G. Jung (Vol. 6). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Maslow, A. H. (1968). Toward a psychology of being. New York: D. Van Nostrand Company.

Mook, D. G. (1987). Motivation the organization of action. New York: W. W. Norton Co.

Myers, I. B. (1980). Gifts differing. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Myers, I. B. and McCaulley, M. H. (1985). Manual: A guide to the development and use of the Myers-Briggs type indicator. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Romano, P. R. (1986). Educational and intrapersonal characteristics of Pennsylvania's pupil services administrators. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Rotter, J. B. (1966). General expectancies for internal versus external control of reinforcement. Psychological Monographs, 80, (Whole No. 609).

Snow, R. E. (1980). Intelligence for the year 2001. Intelligence. 4, 185-199.